



# Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

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## Study Underscores Importance of Passing Energy Efficiency and Renewables Legislation

**MADISON** – A new study shows that Wisconsin could effectively maximize conservation funding efforts underscores the need to pass energy efficiency and renewables legislation.

The study, which was commissioned by Governor Jim Doyle's Energy Efficiency and Renewables Task Force, points the way to cost-effective strategies for statewide energy conservation efforts and use of renewable energy sources in Wisconsin.

"With the tremendous increases we are seeing in natural gas prices to heat our homes and generate electricity, we should move quickly to implement those strategies," PSC Chairperson Dan Ebert explained. "And the energy efficiency and renewables legislation is the vehicle to do it."

The energy efficiency and renewables legislation, based on the Governor's Task Force recommendations, was introduced by the Energy and Utilities Committees in both Houses as Assembly Bill 841 and Senate Bill 459, thanks to the leadership of Representative Phil Montgomery and Senator Rob Cowles. Under the proposal, the PSC would be directly involved in setting the funding levels for utility efficiency programs and the Public Benefits program, the state-level energy efficiency program run by the Department of Administration.

"Better coordination between the PSC, the agency that oversees electric generation and utilities, and the Department of Administration will make the statewide energy efficiency program even more successful," according to Chairperson Ebert. "The study charts the way to achieve that success by showing us which programs will maximize our energy efficiency dollars."

The study released by the Energy Center of Wisconsin today recommended a maximum spending level of between \$75 and \$120 million per year to meet achievable energy savings in Wisconsin. Currently, for 2006, the Public Benefits program is budgeted for \$37 million and the utilities and co-ops will spend another \$40 million. It shows Wisconsin could save enough electricity through conservation to defer construction of one power plant every five years and to replace the natural gas used by as many as 65,000 homes each year.

Chairperson Ebert encouraged the Legislature to pass the legislation and put in place this critical piece of energy policy that will make Wisconsin a leader in energy efficiency and renewables.

The final energy efficiency and renewables potential report can be found at the Energy Efficiency and Renewables Task Force website at <http://energytaskforce.wi.gov/section.asp?linkid=34>.

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